

For Immediate Release: May 27, 2011

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Bi-Partisan Senate Bill Achieves the Same Fiscally Irresponsible Outcome as Bachmann Legislation

Washington, DC – Today, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) issued the following statement, regarding legislation (S. 1134) introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Al Franken (D-MN), Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI), and Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) to replace the Stillwater Lift Bridge with a \$700 million mega-bridge over the St. Croix River. Similar to Congresswoman Michele Bachmann's legislation (H.R. 850), this proposal authorizes a freeway style bridge that is currently prohibited by the National Park Service because it violates the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

"This mega-bridge legislation is a fiscally irresponsible bipartisan plan that creates a transportation nightmare for residents along Minnesota Highway 36. Its language ignores much less expensive bridge options that meet the needs of Stillwater residents and comply with federal law – fiscally responsible options I strongly support.

"This Senate legislation is a disappointment. It achieves exactly the same outcome as Congresswoman Bachmann's bill by removing protections for taxpayers in favor of an excessively large and costly bridge that overwhelmingly benefits Wisconsin.

"This Senate bill doesn't change any of the facts or answer any of the concerns voiced by local officials and residents about this project. The Senate bill puts Minnesota taxpayers on the hook to fund the most expensive bridge ever built in the history of our state. If the traffic projections are accurate, this \$700 million mega-bridge will push tens of thousands of semi-trailers and cars into the Minnesota Highway 36 corridor, which is already at capacity according to Minnesota Department of Transportation officials."

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.
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